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## “CONSCIOUSNESS; AN EVALUATOR OF DISCRIMINATION AND EXPOLITATION IN NATIONAL CAPITALISTIC STATE”

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### ABSTRACT

Arundhati Roy, delve into themes of feminine consciousness and marginalization. The work primarily highlights the struggles of middle-class urban women seeking education and social participation against a backdrop of patriarchal violence and oppression. Political power has led to the emergence of terms such as genocide, political economic exploitation, racism, and class differences. The work addresses issues and socio-political questions like anti-globalization, environmentalism, anti-nuclear campaigns, capitalism, and land rights. Nationalism, imperialism, nuclearism, environmental population, privatization, genocides, resource exploitation, and racism. The consciousness evaluates crucial roles of responsibility and accountability and tackling social and political challenges with measurable impacts, and promoting socio-political engagement in capitalistic state. Despite critiques of capitalism and nationalism, the work offers a hopeful outlook for a society free from discrimination and Exploitation.

**Key words:** Consciousness, Gender, Nationalism, capitalism and Exploitation.

### 1.1 THE INDIA WOMEN: STATUS AND CONSCIOUSNESS

The period of World War II and India's independence marked a period of reconstruction, regeneration, and rehabilitation. Women's status and consciousness were prominent themes in Indian English writing, with a shift from public interest to the inner intricacies of individuals. The representation of women in literature by female authors like Arundhati Roy raises the question of whether they can automatically be defined as feminists. Indian women writing in English are recognized as a major contemporary current in English-language literature. Female writers have contributed to the development of some of the greatest novels, poems, essays, and short stories in English literature. The younger generation of writers, such as Bhabani Bhattacharya, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, and Arundhati Roy, focused on the personal concerns of individuals, including women. The psychological analytical study of human beings added a new dimension to Indian English novels, shifting from social interest to the inner intricacies of individuals.

The upsurge of women novelists in India placed women at the center of the Indian English novel, leaving men on the periphery. Many focused on feminine issues and recorded their experiences as individuals of the same gender, making women the center point of the Indian English novel. Feminism emerged as a response to injustice and inequality, with women writers addressing moral, social, economic, emotional, and spiritual issues. They redefined the concepts of marriage and sex, aiming for equal positions for women. Women writers often focus on the new woman, their problems, predicament values, and lifestyle, often distracting from traditional family structures and home peace. Some deplorable women writers interrogate social phenomena, such as marriage, motherhood, control of sexuality, and customs, while others are traditionalists and protesters who take subversive stands. These writers expose the strengths and weaknesses of women, believing in their own freedom as creative writers. They often represent a larger context where women's rights and gender issues often prevail as their concerns. Feminist novelists like Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Kamala Markandaya, and Arundhati Roy are prominent in Indo-English fiction, representing a variety of shades, colors, and visions. Their writings highlight the struggle of women in a typical Indian society, focusing on the depressed plight of contemporary middle-class, urban Indian women. They aim to rebuild Indian womanhood, which has been regarded as ideally warm, gentle, and docile. Many Indian women novelists emphasize women's issues and have a women's viewpoint on the world. Arundhati Roy is known for her boldness in presenting the status of women in Indian society and depicting women's status and consciousness in fictional form.

Critics argue that the writing of male and female authors will differ due to their different life experiences. Education has always been an instrument of enlightenment, with women's education and status being reduced during the Sultanate and Mughal periods. However, valor and courage were not solely male bastions, as numerous Rajput queens exhibited exemplary leadership. The Indian Renaissance period saw social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwarchand Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, and Swami Vivekananda raise the issue of women's education.

During the freedom struggle, national leaders deliberately cultivated linkages with rural women and women's organizations, harnessing and demonstrating mass support for the cause of freedom. This change in women's perceptions of themselves and society recognized their potential to contribute to overall national development. The participation of women in the national movement shaped the mission of women in India to a great extent, legitimizing their claim to share the responsibility of governance. Arundhati Roy is an interesting example for several reasons. While she was hailed in the West as the coming of the global author, she has been far more controversial back in India. As a handful of Indian writers have become worldwide celebrities, there has been a backlash in India. Roy is often dubbed insufficiently Indian and barred from college curricula. Orhan Pamuk, another Indian writer, has achieved incredible success in the Western world but is considered an outcast in some segments of his own country due to his perceived pro-Western views and criticism of Turkish Islamic fundamentalism.

It is questionable whether the novels we associate with globalization have a greater focus on the strangeness of human behavior and all sorts of different cultures than the great novels of the nation that began to emerge in the 18th century and defined the form's highest achievement. In some ways, the novels we associate with globalization have a lot more in common with them than with the great novels of the nation that began to emerge in the 18th century and that came to define the form's highest achievement.

Roy highlights the conflicting binaries in human society, including the supremacy of men over women, differences between touchable and untouchable, and self and other. These dualisms establish patriarchal dominance and power confined to economically privileged individuals. Eco-feminists, like Vance, reject hierarchies and celebrate diversity. In the novel, Pappachi, Ammu's father, dominates the family and uses violence to control his wife, Mammachi. Mammachi and Ammu represent the marginalized

women's class who endure suffering, with only the male members receiving all the benefits. Ammu's brother pursues higher education, while her career stops after formal education. Women are generally considered 'other', and men try to control them through violence. Ammu is shown as a foil to the male characters, attempting to free herself by running away from her home, marrying her chosen man, and protesting his irrational behavior. Eco-feminism rejects all forms of dualism and domination, celebrating diversity.

The story of Chacko exposes the concept of patriarchal violence as he, like his father, attempts to dominate others and control the family business, disregarding the interests of his mother and sister. Chacko is a replica of the capitalist patriarch, exploiting the women's class and capitalist mentality. Ammu, a resistance against this social inequality, opposes this system. Mammachi, who supports traditional patriarchal views, allows Chacko's illegitimate sexual relationship and views Ammu's relationship with Velutha as 'reckless' and 'irrational'. Ammu and her children are unwelcome in their paternal home, while Sophie, Chacko's daughter, receives special care. Both Ammu and Velutha become victims of social oppression, facing inhuman torture and becoming victims of patriarchy. Despite being restrained by dominant institutions, they highlight the injustice, inequality, and dual nature of power structures. Roy argues that a society's economy is crucial to destroying the natural environment and marginalizing women. Carolyn Merchant suggests that capitalist patriarchy and patriarchal influence are the root causes of these issues. The novel portrays Velutha's organized killing as a political vendetta, as he represents a particular political party. Velutha represents the economically exploited lower section of society, which is forced to work at low wages and seek better livelihoods. Despite his efforts, he has never received recognition for his work. Ammu, like Velutha, faces the consequences of revolting against society, being discarded by her family, and failing to seek justice. She dies pathetically and lacks a proper cremation. Both Ammu and Velutha were threats to the existing power structure and paid a heavy price for their defiance. Their struggle exemplifies the need to revive the economic system and fight for a better socio-economic sphere. The 'muted group' theory highlights the marginalized groups, who are silenced and lack the basic right to speak. They communicate through back-channel communication, regardless of gender. Roy argues that original ideas are silenced due to political ideology, and ideas are segregated into native and non-native categories. Native ideas are relegated, while non-native, English, or western ideas and artificial culture are promoted. Patriarchy plays a significant role in suppressing and dominating the marginalized group, contributing to the ongoing environmental crisis. The theory emphasizes the interconnectedness between humans and ecological balance and calls for a global movement against social oppressions such as gender, caste, class, race, and nature. The backchannel communication motif is evident in the bonding of twins, who seem unnatural and unconventional to society. Mortensen's novel, *The God of Small Things*, explores the consequences of misusing nature for progress. Both twins and humans are inseparable, and real development requires co-existence and care for each other. Human survival instincts are also described through the backchannel communication motif. Estha uses a defense mechanism to handle life's odd situations, similar to a lungfish's adaptations. His character changes, like a chameleon, to find respite from extreme conditions. Estha's emotional conflict is linked to the octopus's three-heart structure.

The novel portrays societal discrimination against women, particularly women, who are denied paternal property and education. Ammu, a woman who aspires to protect her children, is deprived of these rights by her brother Chacko, who disregards her sister's rights. This patriarchal structure hinders Ammu's personal growth and development. She is physically involved with a paravan, Velutha, and dreams of a small world. However, her dreams are trampled by the police, who become the guardians of the law. Ammu's premature death at thirty-one symbolizes the death of thousands of women in a male-dominated patriarchal society, highlighting the ongoing issue of gender inequality and societal injustice. Ammu's daughter Rahel, representing Arundhati Roy, suffers from mental and physical agonies due to her drunkard father. Ammu's

separation forces Rahel to leave home at a young age, leading to her and her brother's arrival at Ayamenem House. Rahel witnesses numerous misfortunes and experiences separation, causing her pain.

The story revolves around Rahel, a woman who experiences psychological trauma due to her separation from Ammudisturb. The members of Ayamenem House are treated poorly by Ammudisturb, leading to neglect and disdain at their maternal uncle's house. The illicit love affair between Ammu and Velutha is a significant blow for Rahel, as she must identify Velutha as the main culprit after his death. Ammu's interference makes it difficult for Rahel to live independently. The story portrays the suffering of Indian women under patriarchy, social constructs, and male chauvinism. The protagonists represent Indian women in a broader sense, highlighting the unique struggles faced by each woman.

*"It can be called the story of sufferings of Baby Kochamma, Mammachi, Ammu and Rahel. They all suffer in different ways. In a country like India where patriarchal system is very strong, women suffer mentally, physically and sexually" (Rajpal66).*

Arundhati Roy's novel highlights the deliberate cruelty against women's interests by progressive politicians, family members, and the police. These forces thrive in traditional Indian society, gaining support from weaker individuals. British feminist theoretician Jennifer Mather Saw emphasizes the importance of understanding and addressing these harmful forces.

*"Families both shape and are shaped by factors that are clearly of political significance. In particular, we shall see, their structures play a key role in impoverishing and disadvantaging women; and their structures are shaped, at least in part, by constraints imposed by laws, workplace, and the ways that children are educated" (Jennifer 89).*

Arundhati Roy's novel critiques the perpetuation of exploitative forces against women, focusing on the lives of three main female characters. Baby Kochamma, a victim of social prejudice, is conditioned by society and identifies with suppression ideas. Mammachi, a dehumanized woman, suffers in a society dominated by men, and Ammu, the protagonist, represents the defiance of educated, passionate, and thinking women fighting for freedom and equality.

Women have been portrayed negatively in literature since the 1970s, with male writers projecting a gloomy and shadowy world for women. Women are often seen as devoid of artistic creation and considered objects of sex. This predicament led women writers like Shashi Deshpande, Bharti Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Manju Kapur, and Arundhati Roy to write against a male-dominated patriarchal society. They tell stories of injustice and oppression faced by Indian women, highlighting their struggle for identity, economic, and social freedom. In conclusion, Arundhati Roy's novel effectively critiques the oppressive forces against women and highlights the struggles of educated, passionate, and thinking women in India.

The 21st century presents a paradox of globalization, as it leads to increased interconnectedness but also division due to social hierarchies and diverse identities. Arundhati Roy's novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, explores the struggles of marginalized individuals in a challenging society. The novel highlights the intersection of gender, caste, religion, and ethnicity and critiques policies prioritizing free markets and privatization. The novel highlights the complex struggles faced by those not treated as people and the need for social protection.

## 1.2 NATIONALISM, CAPITALISM AND RACISM

The essay entitled "Listening to Grasshoppers," which is the subtitle of collection of Roy's works, was born from lecture in Istanbul in January 2008. This conversation was held on the first anniversary of the tragic assassination of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink. He was brutally murdered for daring to discuss a topic that was strictly forbidden in Turkey: the Armenian Genocide of 1915, which claimed more than a million victims. During the lecture, I discussed the history of genocide and the denial of such crimes, highlighting the deep connection between "progress" and genocide. I was always amazed that the political party responsible for the Armenian Genocide in Turkey was ironically called the Committee of Unity and Progress. Many of the articles in this series examine the contemporary relationship between federation and progress, or in today's terms, nationalism and development, which are seemingly indisputable pillars of modern free market democracy. But we now know that both of these ideologies, taken to extremes, have the potential to cause ultimate catastrophic destruction, such as nuclear war or climate change. The significance of the human spirit is overshadowed by the focus on various deodorant brands. The term "market" no longer refers to a physical location for purchasing goods and supplies.

Although these essays were written between 2002 and 2008, the pivotal moment, the catalyst, came in 1989, when capitalism emerged triumphantly in the rugged mountains of Afghanistan, marking the end of Soviet communism. However, there is a possibility that the tide is turning again. Could it be that these very mountains are now burying capitalism? It's too early to tell. Shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Indian government, formerly a prominent member of the Non-Aligned Movement, quickly changed course and fully aligned with the United States, the dominant power in the newly formed country. Established unipolar world; the rules of the game have suddenly and completely changed. Millions of individuals living in remote villages and untouched forests, many of whom had no knowledge of Berlin or the Soviet Union, could not understand how events in these distant places would affect their lives. The process of their expropriation and displacement began as early as the early 1950s, when India adopted a Soviet-style development model centered on the construction of massive steel plants (Bhilai, Bokaro) and numerous large dams. The era of privatization and structural adjustment only accelerated this process at a staggering pace. Today, terms like progress and development have become synonymous with economic "reforms," deregulation, and privatization. Freedom has come to mean choice.

A "market" is a borderless space where anonymous corporations do business, including trading "futures." The concept of justice has now become limited to human rights, but only a select few are considered important. This manipulation of language has allowed these corporations to silence their critics by labeling them as "anti-progressive," "anti-development," "anti-reform," and even "anti-national." When people talk about saving rivers or protecting forests, they are asked about their faith in progress. Those whose land are flooded by dam reservoirs or demolished houses are asked if they have an alternative development plan. And those who advocate the government's responsibility to provide basic education, health care, and social security are accused of being anti-market. It seems absurd to argue against markets, doesn't it? Shortly after coming to power, the BJP conducted a series of powerful nuclear tests. Although India entered the nuclear arena in 1975, the 1998 tests had a different impact politically. The tests were met with a wave of triumphant nationalism that injected a disturbing language of aggression and hatred into public discourse. However, none of the rhetoric was really new. The situation has changed drastically, as what was previously deemed unacceptable is now being embraced and celebrated. Hindu communalism and nuclear nationalism, similar to corporate globalization, have surpassed the professed principles of political parties. The toxic poison was directly injected into our bloodstream. It is now present, with all its brutality and mundane existence, affecting our daily lives, regardless of whether the ruling government claims to be secular or not. The Muslim community has seen a significant decline in its wealth and now finds itself at the lowest rung of

the social hierarchy, next to Dalits and Adivasis. The Gujarat genocide serves as the main focus of the opening essay in this collection, entitled "Democracy: Who is she when she is at home?" written in May 2002, when violent mobs still roamed the streets, targeting and terrorizing Muslims. I deliberately chose not to update the content of any of the essays because I believed it would be interesting to see how a thorough examination of the systemic nature of a situation often contains hints of future events. Instead of updating the essays, I put in new notes. For example, a paragraph in an essay discussing the Gujarat genocide asks the question: Will the anniversary be celebrated next year? Or will there be another group to hate by then? Perhaps in alphabetical order: Adivasis, Buddhists, Christians, Dalits, Parsis, Sikhs? Those who wear jeans or speak English or those with thick lips or curly hair? We won't have to wait long to find out.

Arundhati Roy's novel explores the impact of uneven power dynamics not only internationally but also in local communities. The influence of British colonialism, personified through Ammu and the late father Chacko, is explored in the second chapter, which leads to a discussion of the family's origins. In this chapter, Ammu describes her father as a staunch supporter of British values, even going so far as to refer to him as a "shit wiper," emphasizing her frustration at how he refused to believe her account of her ex-husband's boss, Hollick, showing interest in another man's wife. Pappachi's steadfast belief in British morality, demonstrated by his adherence to one of the Ten Commandments, prevents him from considering the alternative perspectives of his own daughter and son-in-law. By dismissing Ammu's claims, Pappachi reinforces the idea that the British male colonizer is beyond reproach. However, as Roy points out, there are already mixed-race children on the estate that Hollick gave to the tea pickers he favored, challenging the notion of British superiority. This incident marked his first foray into the world of management, which serves as another example of how British colonizers like Hollick objectified and romanticized those who differed from them. The implication is that Ammu's physical attractiveness and ability to bear children can be used to secure her husband's precarious job prospects. What's more, Ammu's position is further compromised due to her gender. Despite the fact that she worked just as hard as Chacko at the factory, whenever he came into contact with food inspectors or sanitary engineers, he always referred to it as "my factory, my pineapples, and my cucumbers." Legally, this event was accurate because Ammu, as a daughter, had no legal claim to the property. Chacko's choice of language when dealing with government authorities shows how descriptions of reality can be manipulated to suit the needs of an intended audience. Martin Luther King Jr. dared to make connections between capitalism, imperialism, racism, and the Vietnam War that were considered taboo. Consequently, even his memory became dangerous and a potential threat to public order after his murder. Various foundations and corporations have made significant efforts to reshape his legacy to align it with a market-friendly format.

### **1.3 SOCIAL REALISM IN CONTRAST TO GENDER DISCRIMINATION, CASTEISM AND CLASS EXPLOITATION**

Realism is not a mere replica of reality but rather a set of conventions that create vivid illusions of the world outside the text. This is achieved through careful selection, exclusion, description, and the way readers are addressed. This article takes a different approach to exploring the socio-realist aspects and ideas of Arundhati Roy. The book deals with how seemingly insignificant things can greatly influence people's behavior and lives. Revealing the true identity and oppression faced by the people of Kerala at that time, Roy portrays each character in a vivid and detailed manner to effectively portray real-world issues. The interactions between untouchables and touchable in Ayemene clearly reveal feelings of inferiority. Betrayal is also a recurring theme in the story, as love, ideals, and trust are abandoned in various ways, affecting the characters deeply. Realism, as a writing style, aims to faithfully capture and reflect the real way of life. However, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of realism, and opinions about its purpose and use

vary among academics and filmmakers. However, it is clear that there are different forms of realism, all of which try to present different aspects of life as they are actually lived.

Social realism emerged as a reaction to the idealistic and exaggerated self-importance promoted by romanticism. With a newfound awareness of social issues, social realists undertook to challenge notions of art and style that appealed only to the senses and emotions. The term "social realism" arose from Russian-influenced beliefs about the role of literature in a revolutionary socialist society. The global production of social realist fiction is characterized by a belief in the power of language and the writer's ability to convincingly and accurately depict social reality. Arundhati Roy uses the lens of social realism to address various social issues prevalent in society, such as gender discrimination, untouchability, oppression of the marginalized, corrupt police administration, and cultural conflicts. The novel's central theme revolves around the clash between the "Big Man" and the "Little Man," symbolized by the lantern and the candle. In the story, two individuals, Ammu and Velutha, who are considered insignificant, are forced to face greater forces. Untouchability remains a significant social issue in contemporary society, as depicted through the character of Velutha, who has long been exploited due to his lower caste status. Roy also highlights the derogatory term "Veshya" used to refer to a respectable woman. Central to the novel is the relationship between Ammu and Velutha, which eventually leads to disastrous consequences for all involved. The most prominent theme of the novel is the integral role of sex in human existence, where no other factor has such importance. Ammu's marginalized position within her family and society forces her to rebel against the prevailing mainstream culture, which restricts her freedom and autonomy. Human society is a complex mixture of differences in terms of social status, interests, talents, and opinions because heterogeneity and diversity are inherent aspects of human life. Through *The God of Small Things*, Roy seeks to raise awareness of the cruelty of certain outdated traditions in this society. The novel also delves into the intricacies of Kerala's changing political landscape and the challenges faced by women in a male-dominated society.

Research on the works of Ms. Arundhati Roy focuses on understanding the social realism, social segregation, and political transgression depicted in her works. From a sociological point of view, the study aims to reveal how her works reveal the authentic essence of society, reflecting its social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics. Despite the importance of her voice these days, it is not difficult to understand her message. She articulates her views effectively as a social activist who strives for peace, prosperity, and progress for humanity and the world. The author hopes that readers, especially those sensitive to her novel, will listen carefully to her honest voice and join her in pushing for social change. The author envisages a new social order free from discrimination, exploitation, and inequality and believes that Ms. Arundhati Roy is an extremely successful writer with her timeless creation, *'The God of Small Things'*. Her other works also deal with various social problems, including economic and political transgressions. Overall, the research delves into the social realism, social segregation, and political transgression portrayed in the works of Ms. Arundhati Roy, aiming to shed light on the true nature of Indian society through a sociological lens. Although all of her ideas and opinions are essential these days, they are not difficult to understand and achieve. The author expresses these ideas through her works; she acts as a social activist who strives for peace, prosperity, and progress for all humanity and the world. By portraying the harsh social reality of our country, the author hopes that many empathetic readers of her novel will listen to her honest voice and join her in the fight against social injustice. As a progressive writer, she would be content to see a new social order free from discrimination, exploitation, and inequality. *'The God of Small Things'* realistically portrays the gender discrimination prevalent in Indian society. The central character, Ammu, longs for pleasure, happiness, and a life without obstacles and limitations. She suffered the cruelty of her father, Pappachi, who physically abused her and her mother, Mammachi, with a brass vase. Amma was also denied a college education as Pappachi believed it was an unnecessary expense for a girl, while her brother Chacko was sent to Britain for education. Arundhati Roy uses satire to critique patriarchal oppression. According to her, women are not

mere objects for men's pleasure but rather a necessary and valuable part of a man's life. In a country like India, where the patriarchal system is deeply rooted, women suffer physically, mentally, and sexually. Thus, Arundhati Roy puts into focus the deliberately constructed agencies of cruelty that work against women's interests. All the burning problems of society that uphold patriarchal norms and the immediate need to resolve them have been presented through the novel.

*“Though Mammachi had conical corneas was already practically blind Pappachi would not help her with the pickle-making, because he did not consider pickle-making a suitable job for a high-ranking ex-Government official. He had always been a jealous man, so he greatly resented attention his wife was suddenly getting” (Roy 47).*

Despite Mammachi's cone-shaped corneas and near-blindness, Pappachi refused to help her make the cucumber, believing it to be beneath his status as a former high-ranking government official. Always envious, Pappachi felt a strong resentment towards the sudden attention his wife had received. Male dominance prevails in Ayemenem House, a distinctive residence that reflects its unique character. Roy highlights the problems faced by women who are trapped in a complex web of relationships that constantly suppress them and limit their personal freedom. Mammachi, the mother of Ammu, faced opposition from her husband, Pappachi, when she started her own cucumber factory, believing it was an inappropriate occupation for those of higher social status. The novel also delves into the challenges faced by children in our society and portrays them as the most vulnerable group that should be given top priority in all aspects, including the civic, social, cultural, and political spheres. They need unwavering support in difficult times as well as in prosperous times from their families, the nation, and the international community. Our Constitution is committed to providing children with the opportunities and resources to grow in a healthy, unrestricted, and dignified manner while ensuring their protection from any form of exploitation.

*In the fourth chapter, Estha is sexually exploited by the “orange drink lemon drink man” Rahel is also exploited by the society and it is evident from various instances in the novel. (Roy 107).*

In the fourth chapter of the book, Estha experiences sexual exploitation at the hands of a man referred to as "the orange drink and lemon man" (Roy 107). Similarly, Rahel also faces exploitation by society, as depicted in several instances throughout the novel. The novel also addresses the issue of 'untouchability', which was a significant social problem during the colonial period. Many lower-class individuals converted to Christianity under the influence of European missionaries, but they were still not accepted into the Syrian Christian community and were treated as untouchables. The book depicts how Velutha, along with his father, would deliver coconuts to the Ayemenem house, but they were never allowed to enter the room and were forbidden from touching anything that a 'touchable' person had touched. Velutha faces discrimination and segregation from upper-class individuals in all aspects of his life. His troubles begin when he becomes attracted to Ammu, which leads him to trespass into the world of a touchable woman and become a victim of her emotions. Ammu and Velutha are mutually attracted to each other and engage in immoral activities by the river near the history house. Velutha, an Indian symbol of Dalit heroism, is a socially marginalized, politically ignored, and physically abused character who aspires to rise above his lowly status but is constantly oppressed. Despite being highly skilled and dedicated to his work, he is not adequately rewarded. He is a character who deeply loves Ammu and her twins, and although he is devoted to the party's cause, he receives no support from the party leader, Mr. Pillai. The character faces untouchability and injustice.

*“There was nothing accidental about what happened that morning. Nothing incidental. It was no stray mugging or personal settling of scores. This was an era imprinting itself on those who lived in it”. (Roy 293)*

The events that transpired that morning were no accident. These were not random robberies or personal vendettas. Instead, they were significant moments that left a lasting impact on the people who experienced them, representing the essence of the times in which they lived. A major issue in Roy's novel is the clash between different cultures within society. The story revolves around individuals, particularly those who have been marginalized and overlooked by society, and the heavy consequences they face for being born as either untouchables or women. "The God of Small Things" goes beyond simply narrating events or describing objects; it serves as a reflection of the social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics of Indian society. While all of Roy's voices in the novel are relevant in the present time, achieving change is not a difficult task. In fact, she practically expresses her social activism through her portrayal of the small things in society. As the author describes the social realities, she hopes that many sensitive readers will hear her sincere voice and join her in taking care of the small things she depicts in her novel. May her voice and vision for these "small things" come true everywhere, so that her rebellious spirit as a social activist and progressive writer can find satisfaction in witnessing a new social order that is free from discrimination, exploitation, and inequality. Through this novel, the author declares a war against the social evils that have oppressed the downtrodden class. The novel challenges the oppressive system based on caste discrimination and the collusion of certain political forces with it. The author demonstrates a deep sensitivity to her surroundings, which is reflected in her writing. The novelist's depiction of social realism becomes clear when we examine the social problems addressed in the novel. The novel's backdrop is the long-standing struggle between different castes and classes. Additionally, gender discrimination is also a significant theme in the novel. In today's society, we are confronted with a significant problem caused by politics and power. These forces use innocent people as a means to achieve their own development and success. This problem is also apparent in the writings of contemporary authors, including Arundhati Roy, who won the Booker Prize for her debut novel, *The God of Small Things*. In this article, we will explore how Roy addresses major issues in our society in her work to raise awareness among her readers. In addition, we will examine whether the power of capitalism or the dominance of certain ruling groups continues to perpetuate socio-political problems in our country.

A prominent figure in contemporary literature, Arundhati Roy has gained recognition for her ability to address social issues in her writings. She won critical acclaim and the Booker Prize for her debut novel, *The God of Small Things*, in 1997. In this novel, she not only explored how small things in life affect people's behavior and lives but also shed light on the ongoing conflicting issues in society. However, she did not stop there. Focusing on socio-political issues, Roy began writing essays, short stories, and other works that highlighted the social and political conflicts our country still faces today. As a result, she became known more as an activist than just a writer. This trend can be seen throughout the history of literature, where early writers revealed the hidden truths of society, and modern writers continue to raise their voice through their writings to create awareness and bring about social change.

*Perhaps, Ammu, Estha and she were the worst transgressors. But it wasn't just them. It was the others too. They all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much..... It was a time when the unthinkable became thinkable and the impossible really happened. (31; emphasis mine)*

Perhaps Ammu, Estha, and she were the guiltiest. But it wasn't just them. It included everyone else. They all broke the rules. They all went into the restricted areas. They all interfered with the regulations that dictated who was to be loved and how and to what extent. It was a time when things that were once unimaginable became possible, and things that seemed impossible actually happened. It is only logical that both Ammu and Velutha, who suffered greatly under the oppressive feudal caste system, joined forces to fight against this unjust social order. Roy reveals India's current sensitive and critical socio-political climate.

Despite being known as the world's largest democracy and a secular nation, India still practices injustice, racism, and discrimination. The living and the dead coexist in the same place, the cemetery, because there is no place left for the life of "the other" except in the cemetery. The distinction between the living and the dead blurs; people are killed and buried in darkness. Contemporary India has lost the balance it once had during the Mughal era, and extremism has reached alarming levels. This text reveals the harsh reality of the present state of India. By including a transgender character, Roy wants to highlight the inequalities that exist in society. The novel also highlights the pervasive stigma of class discrimination, as well as other forms of discrimination and prejudice. It is a compilation of various stories that show how caste, class, and gender discrimination have always dominated life in India. In an interview with The Guardian, Roy stated that her intention was to shed light on these issues.

*Caste is about dividing people up in ways that preclude every form of solidarity, because even in the lowest castes there are divisions and sub-castes, and everyone's co-opted into the business of this hierarchical, silo-ised society. This is the politics of making a grid of class, of caste, of ethnicity, of religion.*

Caste is a system that categorizes individuals in a way that prevents any kind of unity because even within the lowest castes there are further divisions and sub-castes, and everyone is forced to participate in this hierarchical and segregated society. This represents a political strategy of framing based on social class, caste, ethnicity, and religion. Caste discrimination and racial prejudice are also present in Tilo's story, where she is portrayed as "the other," an unconventional, wandering, and central figure in the second part of the novel. Tilo's defiance of established authority can be traced back to her own troubled past. He is the product of a relationship between an untouchable father and a Christian mother of Syrian descent. To cover up her wrongdoing, Tilo's mother gave her up for adoption, only to later reclaim her as her own. Tilo grows up to become a passionate activist in Kashmir, motivated by the lack of basic necessities such as a home, a proper upbringing, and parents. Rebelling against societal norms that exclude Christians and Dalits, he forms a deep ideological and physical bond with Musa Yeswi, a Kashmiri freedom fighter. Tilo also adopts a baby girl named Miss Jabeen the Second, who was born to another rebel named Revathy in the forests of central India. As the daughter of a Christian mother and a Dalit father, Tilo represents marginalized individuals in Indian society and protests against their social exclusion, expressing her opposition through her non-conformist nature. However, despite the intention to shed light on the marginalization caused by nationalist ideologies, the dominant state, and global capitalism, the novel's conclusion appears to be a hopeful fairy tale ending.

## 1.4 CONCLUSION

Women's roles in Indian English literature evolved through World War II and India's independence, showcasing individual experiences. Writers like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, and Arundhati Roy utilized feminist perspectives to challenge traditional gender norms, influenced by historical educational limitations. The Indian Renaissance improved women's societal participation via education and liberation movements. In Roy's "The God of Small Things," she critiques globalization's impact on social protections and patriarchal oppression, addressing marginalization under capitalism. The narrative, focusing on characters like Ammu and Velutha, explores themes of betrayal, love, class exploitation and caste discrimination, while advocating for social justice and highlighting children's vulnerabilities. Despite critiques of capitalism and nationalism, the novel offers a hopeful outlook for a society free from discrimination.

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